

**Annual Report**  
**FISCAL YEAR 2023**  
**July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023**



Photo by Suzanne Sullivan



**Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions**

*Protecting Massachusetts' natural resources since 1961 through education,  
advocacy, and support of conservation commissions*

# MACC Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

## OVERVIEW

The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, founded in 1961 and incorporated in 1978, whose mission is to protect Massachusetts' natural resources by supporting conservation commissions through education and advocacy.

MACC provides legal, scientific, policy, and technical training and support to Massachusetts conservation commissions. In addition, MACC works collaboratively with government agencies, nonprofits, and volunteers to achieve its environmental protection mission. Since the passage of the Wetlands Protection Act in 1972, we estimate that MACC has trained more than 34,000 conservation commissioners and other members through workshops, education programs, conferences, resource materials, Rent-an-Expert events, and one-on-one consultations!

**Fiscal year 2023 (FY23), was a success.**

- **Advocacy.** MACC's priority bill, Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA), passed into law in late 2022, with significant efforts by the Executive Director, many letters of support from hundreds of our members, other environmental coalition partners, and strong legislative support.
- **Education.** MACC educated more than 2,000 participants in *virtual* and in-person workshops, conferences, Fundamental training classes, Lunch & Learn events, and field workshops.
- **Finances.** FY23 was a successful year for MACC: net income exceeded expenses by more than \$62,000.
- **Staff, Board Members, and Volunteer Support.** MACC's small staff of five employees coordinated all aspects of MACC's outreach and educational offerings to 351 conservation commissions. The staff, more than 100 volunteers, and the hard-working Board of Directors, helped make this year a success.

MACC supported conservation commissions by providing mostly virtual environmental education programs and workshops throughout the year. From March 2020 through 2022, COVID-19 emergency regulations required changes to educational offerings and working locations. MACC's Board of Directors and staff pivoted from in-person training to virtual offerings, including moving to virtual conferences. As the pandemic emergency restrictions were lifted in 2022, MACC provided a mixture of in-person events as well as virtual training events. MACC staff began working a hybrid schedule – both in the Belmont office as well as in home offices.



**PLPA Passage Celebration, January 2023, State House Library**  
(Rep. Ruth Balsler, Sen. Jamie Eldridge and env. coalition members)

## EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

MACC's education program focuses on the "Fundamentals for Conservation Commissioners", a 13-unit, 20-hour, certificate training course that provides the basics of conservation commissions' responsibilities and operations. The certificate program provides information on wetlands protection and permitting under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and conservation commissions' authority under the Conservation Commission Act.

Participants who complete the five required Fundamentals units and three of the eight elective Fundamentals units receive a Certificate of Completion. In FY20, there were 47 Fundamentals Certificate Program graduates and in FY23 there were 92 graduates. The virtual format allows higher numbers of participants in a virtual classroom; we plan to continue virtual training to allow for increased flexibility of schedules and minimize travel.

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In addition to MACC's Fundamentals Program, two conferences are given each year: one large conference in the spring, and a smaller conference in the autumn. The conferences provide a wide range of workshop topics focused on helping conservation commissions and other environmental experts in areas of wetlands and open space protection, climate resiliency, and regulatory updates. MACC's springtime Annual Environmental Conference is the largest annual gathering of local environmental officials in New England.

MACC's on-line handbook, *Protecting Wetlands and Open Space: MACC's Environmental Handbook for Massachusetts Conservation Commissioners* is an indispensable resource for those serving on, working with, and appearing before conservation commissions. MACC plans to have a significant update to the *Handbook* after the anticipated changes to MassDEP's Wetland Protection Act regulation (310 CMR 10.00) are published in the coming year. The number of *Handbook* subscriptions rose from 511 in FY20 to 607 subscriptions in FY23.

We continue to provide a free one-year subscription to the *Handbook* to every Fundamentals graduate. New conservation commissions are given a free, one-month trial subscription to the *Handbook* after they complete the on-line video, *Orientation for New Conservation Commissioners*. The number of *Orientation for New Conservation Commissioner* Subscriptions increased from 281 in FY20 to 396 in FY23.

## FALL CONFERENCE 2022

On October 15, 2022, MACC held our first in-person Fall Conference in several years. There were 213 people attending 13 workshops and one Fundamentals Units. Seven Fundamental Units were offered as part of the Fall Fundamentals "Extravaganza" during a one-month period from late September through October 2022.



MACC's 2022 Fall Conference, Devens, MA

## ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE 2022

From February 28 through March 9, 2023, more than 600 participants attended our virtual Annual Environmental Conference (AEC) workshops and Fundamentals classes. Virtual classes were scheduled during the weekday, in the evenings, at lunchtime, and also on two Saturdays to provide as many training options as possible for our members. Participants were able to take 10 Fundamentals Units and 36 environmental workshops. In March 2023, there were unique Keynote Speakers, and an uplifting Awards ceremony.



MACC's 2023 Annual Environmental Conference

## 2023 AEC Keynote Speaker

The new Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), Rebecca Tepper, joined MACC members on Saturday, March 4, 2023, in a *virtual* keynote speech to outline her environmental goals for the coming year. Secretary Tepper discussed the Administration's climate goals and the importance of preserving wetlands and open space as part of our climate resilience efforts. Her presentation can be viewed [HERE](#).

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Rebecca Tepper, EEA Secretary

## 2023 Environmental Service Award Winners

One of our favorite events at the Annual Environmental Conference is the Environmental Service Award Ceremony. On Thursday, March 3, 2022, MACC held the virtual Awards ceremony, hosted by MACC's Board Member and Awards Committee Chair, Lee Curtis of BSC Group. The virtual scheduling gave us time to hear from our awardees, and their tales of open space protection, public education, and outstanding public service. MACC applauds the hard work and enthusiasm of all these outstanding Award winners:

### *Outstanding Public Service Awards – Public Lands Preservation*



Sen. Jamie Eldridge

Sen. Ruth Balsler

Phil Saunders

### *Outstanding Public Service Award*



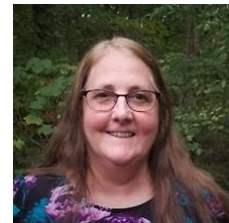
Daniel Gilmore, MassDEP

### *Conservation Commissioner of the Year*



Jeff Livingstone, Franklin

### *Outstanding Environmental Leadership Award*



E. Heidi Ricci

### *Youth Environmental Service Award*



City of Everett, Madeline English School Science Club

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## OTHER OUTREACH PROGRAMS

MACC continued to address Helpline questions from conservation commissioners asking for advice and guidance on difficult questions they or their commissions were facing. We continued to operate our online MACC Web Forum, where members ask questions, get answers, share knowledge and experience, and are part of the conservation conversation. We provide books for sale that are relevant to wetlands and open space issues.

The *Conservation Quarterly* e-magazine was sent to our members with news of upcoming educational offerings, updates on legislation and regulations, important court cases impacting land use and wetlands, and information about other programs of interest. Our website remains a portal to resource materials on wetlands and open space, training opportunities, advocacy, job announcements, and MACC publications.

## ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS



Conservation commissions have been in existence for more than sixty years. Fourteen years before the first Earth Day, residents of Ipswich, Massachusetts, concerned about the proposed destruction of a productive wetland in their town, found a way to protect that natural resource. Their success and vision for the future set into motion the innovative idea that people in each town and city could be empowered to protect the natural resources of their community. That led to the

passage of the Massachusetts Conservation Commission Act in 1957. By the mid-1980s, every municipality in the state had established a conservation commission. Since 1972, when the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act became law, conservation commissions have administered perhaps the most comprehensive and successful wetlands program in the country.

MACC monitors federal environmental initiatives, state legislation, and regulations, in order to make sure that science-based programs are implemented as part of environmental legislation and regulations. We work closely with environmental non-profit partners to track legislation and regulations. In 2022, our top priority was moving the Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA) through the legislature for passage. This bill furthers the long-standing goal of preventing the loss of public parks, conservation lands, forests, watersheds, and other natural resource lands protected by Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution. After 25 years of effort, this bill passed in late 2022. MACC supported increased funding of state environmental programs to be 1% of the state budget, and worked to improve draft legislation related to the Open Meeting Law (allowing remote participation); ecologically based mosquito management; a flood risk protection program; and water and open space legislation.

## 2023 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

On March 4, 2023, MACC held a virtual Annual Business Meeting to vote on the budget and the 2023 slate of candidates to the Board of Directors. We welcomed Brandon Faneuf, Jeff Livingstone, Nick Moreno, and Nathaniel Stevens to the Board. The officers and board members are hard-working volunteers who direct and drive the educational programs for commissioners.

## BOARD AND STAFF

The following individuals were approved as the 2024 Board of Directors at the March 4, 2023, virtual Annual Business Meeting:

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## Officers

President: Amy Ball  
First Vice President: Meredith Avery  
Vice President for Advocacy: Priya Gandbhir  
Vice President for Education: Rebecca (Becky) Weissman  
Secretary: E. Heidi Ricci  
Treasurer: David Henkels

## Directors

Sandra Brock  
Matthew Burne  
Kathleen (Kate) Connolly  
Donald D. Cooper  
Joan Deely  
Brandon Faneuf  
Pamela Harvey  
Jennifer Hughes  
Michael Jewell  
Sarah LaValley  
Jeff Livingstone  
Gregor McGregor  
Nicholas Moreno  
Lana Seguin-Spillman  
Nathaniel Stevens

## MACC Staff

MACC had four full-time and one part-time staff in FY23. This team has been together for many years, and they put their heart and soul into preparing educational programs for MACC members.

Dorothy A. McGlincy, Executive Director  
Michèle Girard, Education Coordinator  
Lindsay Martucci, Office Manager, Newsletter Editor & Member Services Coordinator  
Candace Domos, Finance & Operations Manager  
Joey Wigglesworth, Education & Special Projects Coordinator



MACC Staff

## FINANCES

MACC's income for Fiscal Year Ending (FYE23) in June 2023, was \$457,017, which was \$9,534 less than income in FYE22. Net Income in FYE23 exceeded expenses by \$62,387, and income was derived from membership dues (40%), educational programs (38%), and grants and contributions (22%).

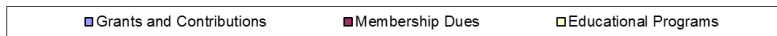
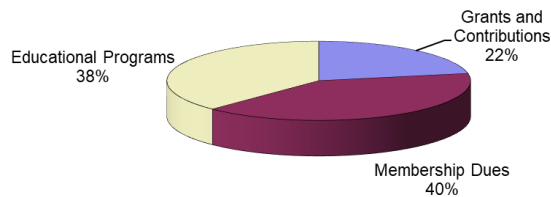
Expenses in FYE23 totaled \$394,630. These expenses are higher than in FYE22 (\$377,466) primarily due to the switch back to an in-person Fall Conference in October 2022. MACC pivoted to virtual training events during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, 2021, and 2022, resulting in lower training costs for in-person training and conferences. FYE23 expenses came from four sources: 52% of our expenses came from educational programs; 31% of expenses came from membership services and advocacy costs; 15% of our expenses came from general and administrative costs; and 2% from fundraising costs.

MACC appreciates our member conservation commissions, corporate and individual members who pay their dues in a timely manner. We also appreciate our donors and other supporters who sponsor MACC events, advertise in our publications, and exhibit at MACC conferences.

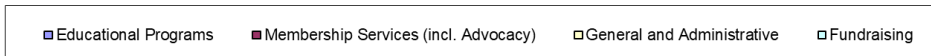
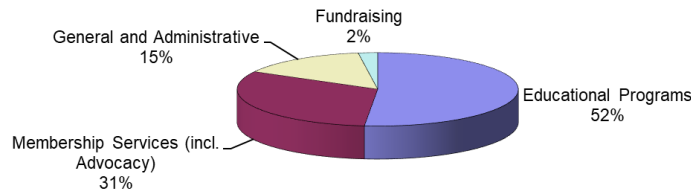
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<b>FY 2023 INCOME</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>
Grants and Contributions:	\$140,238	\$100,781
Membership Dues:	\$177,922	\$183,938
Educational Programs:	\$148,391	\$172,298
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$466,551</b>	<b>\$457,017</b>



<b>FY 2023 EXPENSES</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>
Educational Programs:	\$140,238	\$203,273
Membership Services (incl. Advocacy):	\$177,922	\$124,086
General and Administration:	\$148,391	\$58,507
Fundraising:		\$8,764
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$466,551</b>	<b>\$294,630</b>



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## FY23 Training & Support At-a-Glance

<p><b>626 PARTICIPANTS</b> ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE 2023</p> <p>FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 9, 2023 (VIRTUAL EVENT)</p>	<p><b>213 PARTICIPANTS</b> FALL CONFERENCE 2022 OCTOBER 15, 2022</p> <p><i>IN-PERSON EVENT, DEVENS, MA</i></p>	<p><b>2,100 PARTICIPANTS</b> TRAINED IN FY23 ENVIRONMENTAL CLASSES</p> <p><i>(INCLUDES ALL WORKSHOPS, FUNDAMENTALS UNITS AT CONFERENCES AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, PLUS LUNCH &amp; LEARN WEBINARS)</i></p>
<p><b>686 PARTICIPANTS</b> TRAINED FUNDAMENTALS FOR CONSERVATION COMMISSIONERS</p> <p><i>(INCLUDES ALL FUNDAMENTAL CLASSES AT CONFERENCES AND DURING FY23)</i></p>	<p><b>396 SUBSCRIPTIONS</b> ORIENTATION FOR NEW CONSERVATION COMMISSIONERS</p>	<p><b>92 GRADUATES</b> FUNDAMENTALS FOR CONSERVATION COMMISSIONERS TRAINING PROGRAM</p>
<p><b>60 ENVIRONMENTAL</b> WORKSHOPS</p> <p><b>34 FUNDAMENTALS</b> TRAINING UNITS HELD</p> <p><i>(INCLUDES ALL WORKSHOPS &amp; FUNDAMENTALS CLASSES AT CONFERENCES AND DURING FY23; EXCLUDES LUNCH &amp; LEARNS)</i></p>	<p><b>4 CONSERVATION</b> QUARTERLY (E-MAGAZINE)</p> <p><b>38 E-MACC</b> NEWSLETTERS</p>	<p><b>607</b> ENVIRONMENTAL HANDBOOK SUBSCRIPTIONS</p>